

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SANTIA 06424 221933Z

70

ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 6424

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: CI, PINT, PINS, PROP

SUBJECT: GOVT-SPONSORED INTERVIEW WITH PROMINENT DETAINEE

1. TWO SENIOR REPORTERS FROM GOVT-CONTROLLED RADIO NACIONAL, GABOR TOREY AND FRANCISCO BARAHONA, RECENTLY INTERVIEWED WELL-KNOWN ACTRESS SARA ASTICA, WHO IS PRESENTLY DETAINED AT TRES ALAMOS DETENTION CENTER ON OUTSKIRTS OF SANTIAGO. INTERVIEW WAS SUBSEQUENTLY BROADCAST ON RADIO NACIONAL, AND FULL TEXT WAS PUBLISHED IN "ULTIMAS NOTICIAS" OCT 20; AP RAN EXCERPTS FOR DISTRIBUTION ABROAD.

2. INTERVIEW ITSELF CONTAINS NO STARTLING REVELATIONS. ASTICA STATED SHE HAD BEEN ARRESTED SEPT 6 ALONG WITH HUSBAND AND TWO CHILDREN; NO CHARGES HAVE YET BEEN FILED; LIFE AT TRES ALAMOS WAS "CONSIDERABLY BETTER THAN I EXPECTED" WITH ADEQUATE FOOD AND LIVING CONDITIONS, AND FLUCTUATING NUMBER OF ABOUT 55 OTHER WOMEN WERE ALSO HELD THERE. SHE SUCCESSFULLY PARRIED POLITICAL QUESTIONS ASKING HER TO COMPARE CONDITIONS IN CHILE NOW TO THOSE UNDER ALLENDE AND TO OPINE ON POSSIBLE MUTUAL RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS BY USSR/CUBA AND CHILE, NOTING THAT AS A DETAINEE SHE WAS AFRAID ANY STATEMENT ON HER PART MIGHT BE USED FOR POLITICAL ENDS AND MIGHT PREJUDICE HER OWN SITUATION AND THAT OF HER FAMILY. NEVERTHELESS, SHE EXPLICITLY REFUSED TO REPUDIATE HER SYMPATHIES FOR UP GOVT. SHE STATED SHE HAD SPENT A

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PAGE 02 SANTIA 06424 221933Z

"BAD, BAD WEEK--AS BAD AS CAN HAPPEN TO A HUMAN BEING"

BEFORE BEING SENT TO TRES ALAMOS, PRESUMABLY A REFERENCE TO HER QUESTIONING AT AN UNDISCLOSED INTERROGATION CENTER.

3. JOURNALIST AT RADIO NACIONAL TOLD US INTERVIEW HAD BEEN ORDERED BY "HIGH GOVT. CIRCLES," BUT HE HAD NO IDEA WHY. HE SPECULATED THAT ASTICA WAS CHOSEN BECAUSE OF RUMORS CIRCULATING IN ARTISTIC CIRCLES THAT SHE HAD BEEN KILLED BY GOC.

4. TOREY IS NOW IN US ON IVP GRANT, ACCOMPANIED BY BARAHONA AT RADIO NACIONAL EXPENSE. ACCORDING TO OUR SOURCE, THEY TOOK ALONG WITH THEM MORE RECORDINGS OF OTHER TRES ALAMOS PRISONERS "TO DISTRIBUTE TO US NEWS MEDIA."

5. GOVT-CONTROLLED "LA PATRIA" OCT 22 RAN PICTURE OF ASTICA ANNOUNCING TV THEATER PRODUCTION FOR SHOWING THAT DAY IN WHICH SHE HAS LEADING ROLE.

6. COMMENT. INTERESTING POINT IS NOT SO MUCH WHAT ASTICA SAID OR DID NOT SAY BUT FACT THAT SUCH AN INTERVIEW WAS HELD AT ALL. TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, THIS IS FIRST TIME GOC HAS CONDUCTED INTERVIEW WITH RELATIVELY PROMINENT DETAINEE, THROUGH ITS OWN MEDIA RESOURCES, AND SUBSEQUENTLY AUTHORIZED ITS DIFFUSION. GOC MOTIVATION AT THIS POINT IS OBSCURE, BUT MAY SIGNAL START OF PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN DESIGNED TO SHOW, VIA THEIR OWN STATEMENTS, THAT LIVING CONDITIONS FOR SECURITY DETAINEES ARE NOT AFTER ALL S BAD. IF SO, ASTICA MADE THE POINT, BUT HER CAREFULLY COUCHED RESPONSES TO LEADING POLITICAL QUESTIONS MUST HAVE BEEN SOMEWHAT OF A DISAPPOINTMENT. IN ADDITION, THOSE WHO AUTHORIZED PUBLICATION OF INTERVIEW PRESUMABLY MISSED THE LIKELY RESPONSE OF FOREIGNERS TO REVELATION OF CIRCUMSTANCES OF HER AND FAMILY'S DETENTION, AND OF FIRST WEEK'S INTERROGATION. POPPER

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